

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 16 October 2003 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

PRESENT

Councillors: J M Keeling, Chairman
Mrs M E Smith, Vice-Chairman
Mrs D E Alcock
Mrs G M Thomas
P J Darnes
E A Lea
D Lloyd-Griffiths
J J Moore
L Morris
B E Moran
D Robinson
W W Scragg
M R Sherman
R W Sutton

The Opening Prayer was read by the Reverend David Page.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: Mrs P M Minshull
N T Price

2. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Along with other North West Local Government leaders he had been invited to attend the City of Carlisle Heritage Day. This was an excellent occasion when he had been treated superbly.

He had attended the Civic Parade at Middlewich, awarded the prizes for the VJ Bowling cup and closed the Sandbach Today exhibition. He recommended members to attend this event to appreciate the amount of voluntary work done in the Town. He had attended a North West Military Band concert at Sandbach School and had enjoyed the Borough Civic Ball at Congleton Town Hall. He had awarded the prizes at the Sandbach in Bloom ceremony and praised Mr Nicklin's immaculate prize-winning garden in particular.

He had attended the Astbury Harvest Festival service and the Sandbach School Commemoration Service. He had been arrested outside Congleton Town Hall along with other local civic dignitaries to raise money for the British Heart Foundation. He thanked all those who had sponsored him to the total of £158.

Finally he had attended the Open Minds exhibition at the Sandbach Town Hall and had benefited from relaxation treatment.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2003

Item 10.2 should be amended to say: -

He gave notice of a review of the Council's work-in-progress/pending items and projects at the next Finance Committee meeting and that anything not on that list would be considered closed.

RESOLVED: that the amended Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAYS 11 SEPTEMBER AND 9 OCTOBER 2003

Cllr R W Sutton should have been added to the list of apologies for the meeting of 9 October.

RESOLVED: that the amended Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2003

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow questions from members of the public.

1. Mrs Julia Wright informed members of the proposed Christmas Lights Festival to be held on Friday 28 November 2003. Mrs Wright asked about the possibility of funding from the Town Council. The Clerk agreed to send her an application form and on its satisfactory return would place the matter on the Finance Committee Agenda on 6 November.
2. Mr John France asked what the Council's view was on the proposed Garden Centre. He was read the Planning Committee's comment. Although the Council is in favour of the principle of a Garden Centre because of the employment opportunities it does not approve of the chosen location. The location is unsuitable because the increase in traffic would be intolerable in this residential area containing three nearby schools. As a green field site it is contrary to the Local Plan.

The Chairman re-convened the meeting.

Councillor Mrs P E M Price joined the meeting.

6. CCTV

Mr Tony Potts gave a report on the operation of the Sandbach CCTV system and answered members' questions.

During September there had been 4 incidents observed on Middlewich Road, 5 on the Commons, 7 in Hightown 1 in the Park and 7 in the Cobble and High Street area. Most incidents were the result of cooperation between the Shopwatch and Community Wardens against shoplifters. They had helped in the arrest on one drink driving charge. They also received a number of complaints from the public on incidents such as vandalism, noisy parties, stray dogs, lost property, persistent burglar alarms and abandoned vehicles.

The target Community Warden strength was 12 but they were 4 short. They are recruiting again next month. They have weekly meetings with the Police Community Action Team.

In response to questions Mr Potts said they were responsible for locking the Park gates but if other priorities dictated the gates were left unlocked. He said the noisy camera in the Park had defeated the engineers to whom he had spoken. Members asked him to look into this matter again. Even now it should be possible to keep them on automatic during the hours the gates were unlocked.

Mr Potts had started producing monthly reports. He agreed to post a copy to the Town Council by email when they were produced. Members stressed how important it was that the CCTV and Community Warden successes were well advertised.

Mr Potts was asked if the cameras had spotted an incident at about 2pm on 12 October. He said he would have to check the records at Alsager.

Members were concerned about the problem of maintaining the full complement of wardens.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk will write to the Public Service Director to ask why there is a shortage and ask what is being done to correct the situation.

7. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

7.1 Governing Bodies of Primary Schools

Cllr Mrs G M Thomas was happy to take up her nominated position as governor at Elworth C of E Primary School and therefore a nominated replacement for Cllr Thomas was not required.

8. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL DELEGATES / SUB-COMMITTEES

8.1 Sandbach in Bloom

Councillor Sutton was pleased to announce that Sandbach had won the Civic Pride award for the 10 – 30,000 population category. This was due to a lot of hard work by the Sandbach in Bloom Committee, support from various quarters and despite mindless vandalism. This is the fourth award since 1991. One of the plaques was not suitable for mounting on the Town Hall so they had decided to obtain a replacement. All four plaques would then be displayed on the Town Hall.

The Chairman expressed the appreciation of the Council towards all the volunteers involved.

9. SANDBACH PARTNERSHIP

A response to the Clerk's re-iterated request for two representatives on the Partnership executive and the request for copies of progress reports had been received. A copy of the progress report sent to Cllr Smith was presented to members immediately prior to the meeting.

Cllr Smith said that the Partnership was seeking further funding for their projects.

RESOLVED: that Mrs Beech is invited back to address the Council, that she is told of the Council's disappointment at the Partnership's reply and is reminded

that when she spoke to members on 10 July she had promised that the Council would receive her project report direct.

10. QUALITY COUNCIL PROGRESS

The Clerk reported that he had received the Society of Local Council Clerks remote learning package entitled "Working with your Council" and had joined the email correspondence group set up by SLCC to coach clerks with their responses. The Clerk anticipates that he will have completed the course mid to end 2004.

Already a number of areas where the Council's procedures could be improved have been identified. It is recommended that the biennial review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations starts shortly.

The question of joining the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils was raised.

RESOLVED: that a meeting of the Quality Council sub-committee is convened.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

11.1 M6 FORUM – Chairman's Annual Report

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

11.2 CCC – Cheshire Household Waste Management Strategy

RESOLVED: that the newsletter is received.

11.3 Charlotte Peters Rock - Proposed RAF Cranage Exhibition

She had sent a letter of thanks for her reception at the last Town Council meeting. The Clerk reported on the progress made in setting up the exhibition at the Literary Institution on 7, 8 and 9 November.

RESOLVED: that the letter and report are received.

11.4 Albion Chemicals Group

The Council had been sent a copy of the information package sent to members of the public within their consultation zone concerning the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999. They gave warning of the siren test held on 19 September. Members confirmed that the test had taken place.

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

11.5 CAD - Councils against Dumping

Middlewich TC, Holmes Chapel PC and Sproston PC seek support for their campaign against a waste disposal site at Kinderton Lodge, Sproston.

RESOLVED: that the item is placed on the next Finance Committee agenda.

11.6 Mr Glynn Robinson – Sandbach Cricket Club Appeal

He had sent a letter stating his intention to present the case to the House of Lords is attached.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received.

11.7 CCC – Richard Chiverton - Review of Minor Improvement List

His reply to the Council's request for further information was as follows: -

“Unfortunately, as stated in my original letter, the background to some of these schemes has been lost through the passing of time. I have reviewed the relevant files and have been unable to find any further information on the two schemes within Sandbach. However, they will remain on the list to be used as an ‘aide-memoire’ in assisting the development of future Local Transport Plan programmes.”

RESOLVED: that Mr Chiverton is invited to address a future Town Council meeting to discuss future Local Transport Plan programmes.

11.8 Cheshire Community Council – Local Network Fund

They ask whether we know of any voluntary groups working with children and young people, up to the age of 19 who could benefit from a grant of between £250 and £7,000. The information has been forwarded to Sandbach Youth Project.

RESOLVED: that the letter is placed on the next Finance Committee agenda.

11.9 Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust

They wrote to ask if the Council would be willing to have Simon Yates, Chief Executive, to attend a Council meeting to provide an update of the work of the Trust and the developments that are going to occur over the next year or so.

RESOLVED: that Mr Yates' offer is accepted subject to a more precise definition of the topics to be discussed.

11.10 Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust

They enclosed for the Council's information a copy of the recently produced Annual Report and Accounts along with a copy of the latest Trust newsletter.

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

11.11 CCC - Hamptons bridge replacement - progress update

The Bridge Maintenance Engineer, Nic Wright, reported on 8 October: -

“Further delays with the manufacture and delivery of the pre-fabricated deck units means the bridge will not be ready for opening until week commencing 27 October. The deck units were delivered and erected earlier this week without any hitches, however the on-site steelwork erection is taking longer than predicted. I will update you again next week.”

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

11.12 Cheshire Constabulary – Inspector Alan Holt's progress report

“The Chief Officer has given his support to the outline proposal to second a police officer to work with Sandbach Town Council in targeting local aspects of community concern agreed with the Divisional Commander. The division is now preparing a formal agreement, which subject to legal advice and negotiation with the Council will enable the appointment to be

made in 2004. As this will be the first such appointment in Cheshire, it is in the interests of all parties involved to ensure that the ensuing arrangements cover all aspects of the role and meet the expectations of the Council and the Sandbach community.

Consequently, it is difficult to accurately determine the time-scale involved in reaching mutual agreement because of the detail involved, but it is anticipated that the draft version will be passed for Legal Service scrutiny by the 22nd October. The document will then be passed for the consideration of the Council and your own legal advice. It goes without saying that any proposed amendments will necessitate further legal advice on both sides.

This aside, it would not be unreasonable for us to anticipate agreeing the arrangements by early December, with subsequent appointment to be suit joint service requirements.”

RESOLVED: that the sub-committee is re-convened to progress the matter.

RESOLVED: that the item is placed on the next Finance Committee agenda.

11.13 Mr Colin Pierpoint – Objection to the re-laying of the Cobbles

He explained why he believes the Cobbles should not be re-laid.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received.

11.14 Mrs D Flint – the Event

The Sandbach Today team have organised a youth version to be held on Saturday 25 October at the Leisure Centre from 10am to 3pm. There are 20 different organisations taking part. There will be static displays, activities and demonstrations throughout the day.

All councillors are invited to attend.

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

11.15 CBC – Local Plan Review – Inspector’s Report

RESOLVED: that the Inspector’s report is received.

12. MEMBERS’ ITEMS – MATTERS AFFECTING THE TOWN OF SANDBACH

12.1 332 - Cllr Moran - work-in-progress/pending items and projects

RESOLVED: that any work-in-progress or projects that have not been brought before this Council since May 2003, are now considered as 'closed'.

12.2 333 – Cllr Darnes – Sandbach Transport Plan Phase 2 Implementation.

The meeting was informed that legal notices would be issued during the next few weeks, that drawings were available in the Council offices and that work should start early in the New Year. However, it was suggested that on the basis of phase 1 the plans were not sufficiently detailed and that it was likely that a number of on-site decisions would be made where Town Councillors’ local knowledge could be useful.

RESOLVED: that an engineer from CCC is invited to give a presentation to the Town Council on the details of phase 2 of the Sandbach transport plan implementation.

12.3 334 – Cllr Robinson - Dr Charles Latham Memorial

The proposal was that the Dr Charles Latham Memorial is relocated from Sandbach Park to Ashfields, the New Health Centre. Councillor Mrs Price announced that she had been working for many months to prepare a project to have the memorial relocated to either its original position in High Street opposite the Town Hall or near the bus shelters. The History Society had agreed that the memorial should be moved but wanted assurance that the people of Sandbach would not lose control of it.

RESOLVED: that a working party comprising Councillors Price, Robinson, Alcock, Moran and Minshull is formed to decide the Council's preferred location.

Councillor E A Lea left the meeting.

12.4 335 – Cllr Lloyd Griffiths – Services provided by STC

Under the inevitable local government re-organisation there would be the opportunity if not requirement for Town and Parish Councils to take over some of the local services. By considering the matter now the Council could re 'ahead of the game'.

RESOLVED: with one vote against that a sub- committee is formed to investigate and report on the possible extension of the services provided by STC.

12.5 336 – Cllr Darnes – Relocation of CBC Offices

Cllr Moran declared an interest as a Borough Councillor.

RESOLVED: with one vote against that the Council opposes the proposed relocation of the CBC offices from Westfields to the Junction 17 Business Park.

12.6 337 - Cllr Lloyd Griffiths – Motorway Services Boundary

Although the Motorway Services site is in Betchton Parish the untidiness at the boundary of the site reflects badly on the name of Sandbach.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk writes to request them to clear litter from the boundary of their site. A copy should be sent to CBC Streetscape manager, Mr Steve Jones

13. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Sandbach Town Council will be held at 7.15pm on 18 December 2003 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

J M Keeling
Chairman

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